

Frequently Asked Questions

South Carolina Department of Education–Civil Rights On-Site Review of Career and Technology Education Programs

The South Carolina Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability in admission to, treatment in, or employment in its programs and activities. Inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies should be made to the Employee Relations Manager, 1429 Senate Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201, (803-734-8781). For further information on federal nondiscrimination regulations, including Title IX, contact the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at OCR.DC@ed.gov or call 1-800-421-3481.

What is a Civil Rights On-Site Review?

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is required to perform a minimum of two site visits to school districts and/or multi-district career centers (MDCC) every year for the purpose of assessing their compliance with federal civil rights laws, regulations, and guidelines. The districts or MDCC's selected will undergo a thorough investigation of all schools providing Career and Technology Education (CATE), including premises assessments, documentation review, classroom observations, and interviews of personnel and students. The scope of the on-site review includes the entire school or MDCC in which CTE instruction is provided, and is not limited to the premises specific to CATE.

What will the Civil Rights On-Site Review team be looking for?

The Civil Rights On-Site Review team will be assessing compliance with regard to the following federal civil rights laws, regulations and guidelines:

- Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Vocational Education Program Guidelines for Eliminating Discrimination and Denial of Services on the Basis of Race, Color, National Origin, Sex, and Handicap, published in the Federal Register, March 21, 1979
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

More information regarding these laws, regulations, and guidelines and their application in the educational setting may be found at the United States Department of Education website, <http://www.ed.gov>.

How are districts/MDCC's selected for a Civil Rights On-Site Review?

Selections are made annually according to the SCDE's point-based targeting plan. School districts and MDCC's receive points based on statistical comparison of state-wide enrollment disparities in the areas of sex, gender, race, national origin, and disability. The date of the district's or MDCC's last on-site review is assigned a point value, as well. The two districts or MDCC's with the highest point values for the year will receive an on-site review. Please note that, while this selection process is intended to identify programs with the highest potential for civil rights discrimination, selection for review does not necessarily mean that a civil rights violation of any kind has occurred within the district or MDCC.

What will I need to do if my school district/MDCC is selected for a Civil Rights On-Site Review?

School districts/MDCC's selected for review will be notified in writing at least 30 days in advance. The notification will be mailed to the school superintendent and the CATE director and/or coordinator. The notification will request that documentation be provided to the SCDE for review prior to the visit. The Civil Rights On-Site Review Coordinator will be available throughout the process to answer any questions you may have.

What will happen during the Civil Rights On-Site Review process?

The on-site review team will spend two to three days assessing programs by meeting with administrators, students, and faculty, inspecting facilities to determine program accessibility, and observing classroom interaction. If a MDCC is selected for review, the counselors from the feeder schools will be asked questions during the entrance meeting. Within 30 days following the final day of the review, the Civil Rights On-Site Review Coordinator will mail a Letter of Findings (LOF) to the district superintendent and CATE director and/or coordinator. The district/MDCC will have up to 45 days to respond via Voluntary Compliance Plan (VCP) in which the district/MDCC sets forth a plan to correct the violations in the LOF, including specific timelines and concrete solutions. The Civil Rights On-Site Review Coordinator will assist the agency in resolving any violations within a reasonable period of time, in order to finalize the review process.

If I have questions about the process, whom should I contact?

If you have questions regarding the targeting plan, selection process, or the process of undergoing a Civil Rights On-Site Review of your CATE programs, please contact the Civil Rights On-Site Review Coordinator:

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